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From the Editor:

I've been at the helm of the On Guard for four years now, and it always amazes me the array of missions the Guard is asked to do. It seems that whenever there are lives or property at risk, the Guard is part of the response effort, in numbers few and large.

From a sole helicopter and crew rescuing a stranded hiker in Denali National Park, to thousands called up to protect shoreline from toxic crude in the Gulf, the Guard is what the states turn to in an emergency.

"Disaster on the horizon" on page 5 gives an overall picture of what's been done by hardworking and ingenious troops fighting an environmental disaster in the Gulf Coast.

From energy lost to energy saved: the Guard is doing a lot to shrink its utility bills at its many facilities as we found out. From painting roofs a lighter color so that they reflect the hot summer sun, to installing solar arrays that turn it into electricity, the Guard is working hard to meet federal goals on energy use.

*Soldiers rarely show emotions in combat, but you'd be hard pressed **not** to find tears in the eyes of fathers and sons who reunite while in Iraq in Afghanistan. We highlight three pairs in "Unlikely Reunion."*

Along with our talented staff, we feature several stories from the field.

Army Maj. Craig Heathscott from the Arkansas Guard will put you at attention in "Out of respect," an article about Guardmembers in a rigorous military funeral honors course. Only perfection will do in the presence of a grieving family. One student said it all: "We are a reflection of what they lost."

Tech. Sgt. Oshawn Jefferson chronicles the efforts of a handful of Ohio Air Guard civil engineers in Afghanistan that are "laying the foundation for a successful troop surge."

We scooped up an article from the Indiana Guard on caffeine use and re-ran it here so you can brew over your use of the Guard's number-one stimulant. Thanks for lifting our awareness Sgt. David Bruce.

There's also some "news you can use"—a few safety messages and a list of summer family discounts.

As always, thanks for reading and let us know what you think.

-Master Sgt. Greg Rudl

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SUBMISSION

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